Design Course

Story Sketches for Animation

Visual Expressions of the Story

by
Prof. Phani Tetali and Samidha Gunjal
IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:
https://www.dsource.in/course/story-sketches-animation

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3. Example
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About Story Sketches

Introduction:
• What is a Story Sketch?
A story sketch is a Pre-visualization stage of an animation process. Since animation itself is more about visuals than words, story sketches, are useful as visual expressions of the story/ script. It helps to visualize the story, which can later be converted into a storyboard.

About:
Story Sketches are expressions of the initial ideation immediately after a story /script is done. It is generally in the form of illustrations or scribbles of ideas and includes characters, situations, locations, style for the picture, arrangement of scenes, story telling value all of which make up the narrative of the film.

"Drawings can talk!":
In earlier times, our ancestors used to tell their stories by drawing them on the cave walls in the form of cave paintings. They have illustrated stories about their experiences and rituals on the walls, pots, cloths etc. These are the visuals that still speak of their fascinating life stories by triggering our imagination. Story Sketches are similar in function. They are dramatic drawings which helps to visualize, and bring alive the story convincingly. Each frame creates its own visual world and tells where the action is taking place.

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Process

This is a trial and error stage of the animation where all of the wildest possible ideas are put together to see which ones are more suited for the story. Sometimes story sketches are done by more than one artist in different styles, which provides more visual ideas and options.

• Once the story/ script is ready; story pitching is done to all the story sketch artists, mainly to visualize the story and illustrate initial ideas that come to their mind. This opens up a wide range of possibilities for visuals that might be suitable for the film.

• These story sketch frames are drawn on the panels of exact aspect ratio that will be used in the film. (e.g. 4:3 or 16:9 etc.)

• These panels are then put up on pin-up boards or laid on the table to present in front of all for discussion.

• The drawings that are most apt and convincing are then sorted out and rearranged.

• Check the video for details:

Video:

Discussion Process

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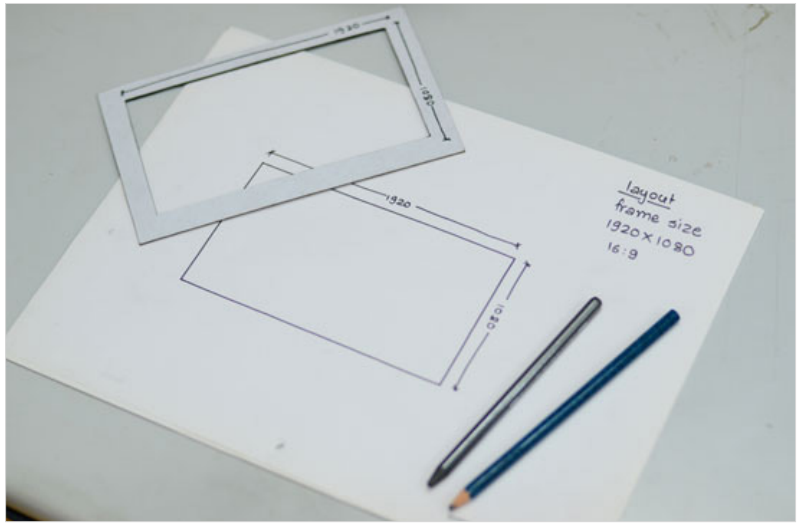
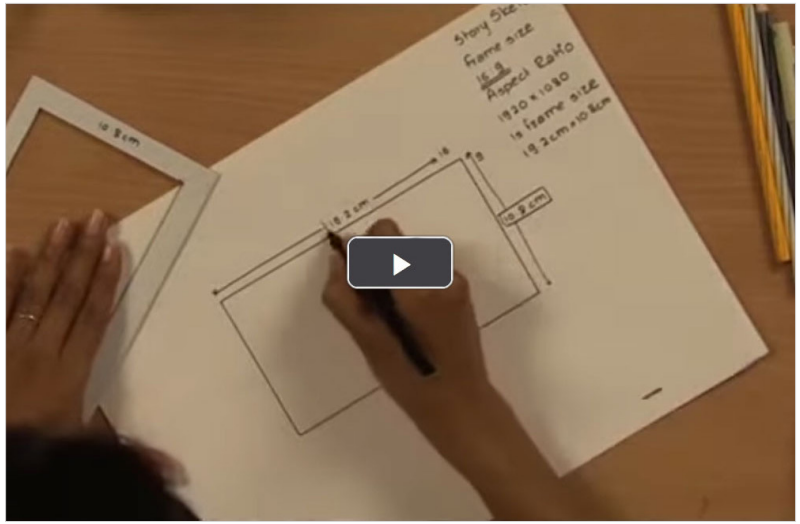
• Suitable sketches taken are arranged and sequenced with rough sound effects on a timeline for the next stage, which is the animatic.



Making a template (about aspect ratio and frame size)

Video:



Making a Template

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Example

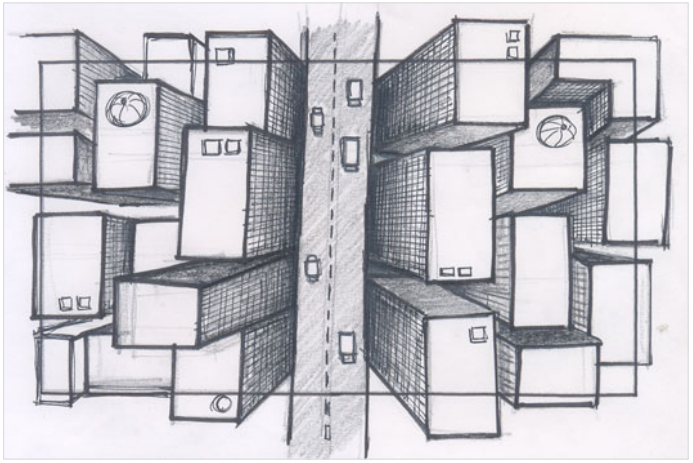
The process of drawing story sketching is explained using the example of the film 'Ur Trapped'.

According to the Script:
1. It's a dull evening, and the busy streets are unbearably loud as we see our protagonist walking down a lane towards his apartment (flat) – Top view preferably.

2. He is tired and walking heavy footed, with his office bag.

3. Suddenly his phone starts ringing. He pauses while walking, and sighs. The phone stops ringing. He starts walking again and takes the next turn to his apartment.

4. Sandy (protagonist) enters his building.



Sketch 01: A top view of the city showing noisy traffic during the evening rush hours.

Sketch 02: The protagonist of the story who is on his way back home from a hectic day at office.

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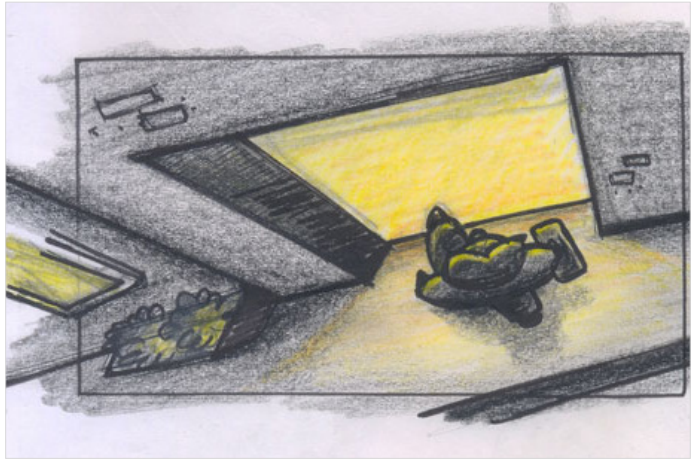
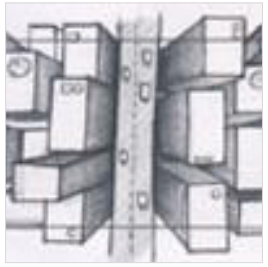
Sketch 03: Sandy is tired and frustrated, so he walking slowly, dragging his feet.



Sketch 04: Sandy reaches his apartment and enters inside.

Details of Sketches are given below:



Sketch 01

Sketch 02

Sketch 03

Sketch 04

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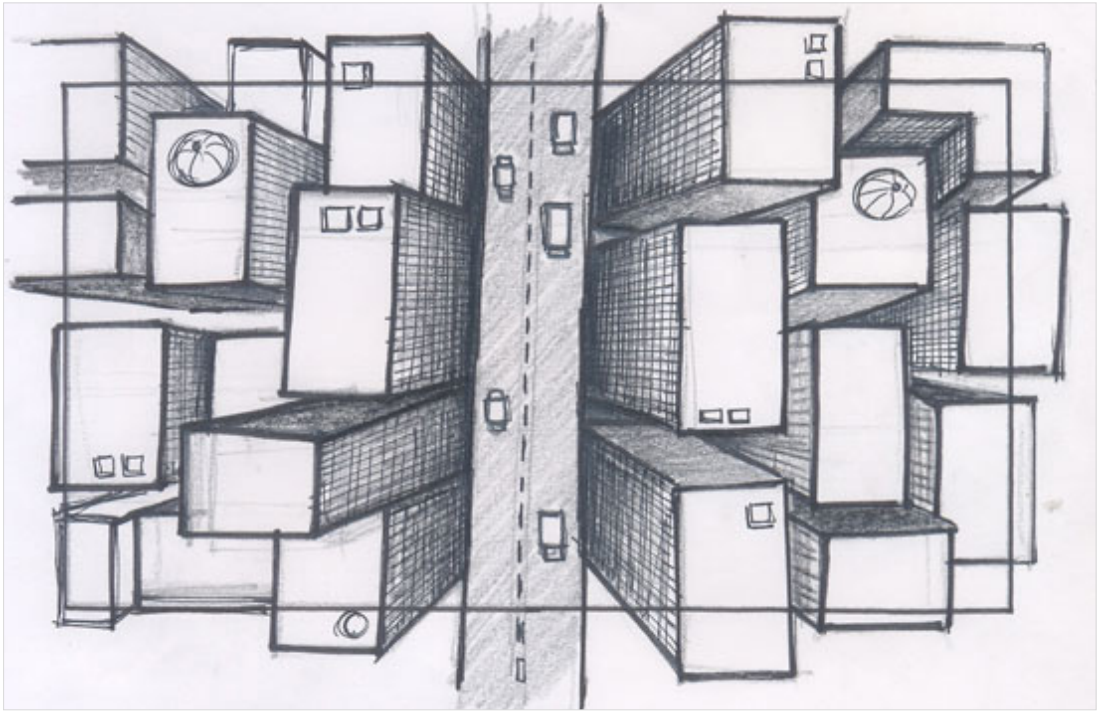
Sketch 01

Top view - Protagonist walking:
It's a dull evening, and the busy streets are unbearably loud as we see our protagonist walking down a lane towards his apartment (flat) – Top view preferably.

• It is the opening scene of the film where the script must explain about the time, situation and location of the event.

• The shot starts with the top view of the city showing noisy traffic during the evening rush hours. It is a metro city where the protagonist resides and works in one of its IT offices.

• High-rise buildings drawn using a distorted Top view that exaggerates their tallness helps emphasize that it is a metro city.



A top view of the city showing noisy traffic during the evening rushhour.

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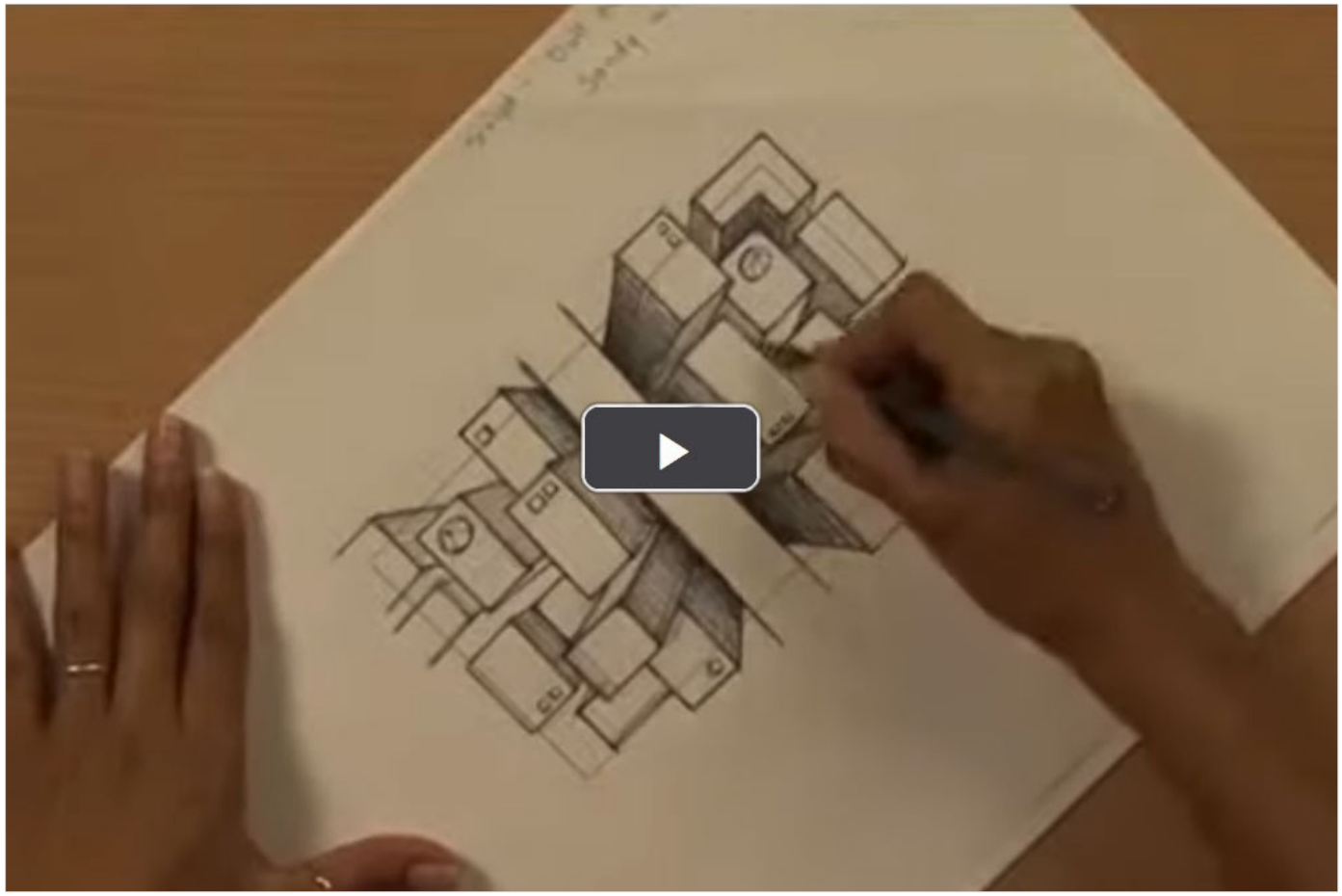

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Sketch 02

He is tired and walking heavy footed, with his office bag:

• The story is about Sandy, the protagonist of the story who is on his way back home from a hectic day at office. It is a dull evening. He is tired and frustrated too.

• In the background, some shops and residential buildings are shown to emphasize that he is about to reach home.

• In the foreground, some street lights and a car passing by add to the mood of the scene.

The protagonist of the story who is on his way back home from a hectic day at office.

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Sketch 03

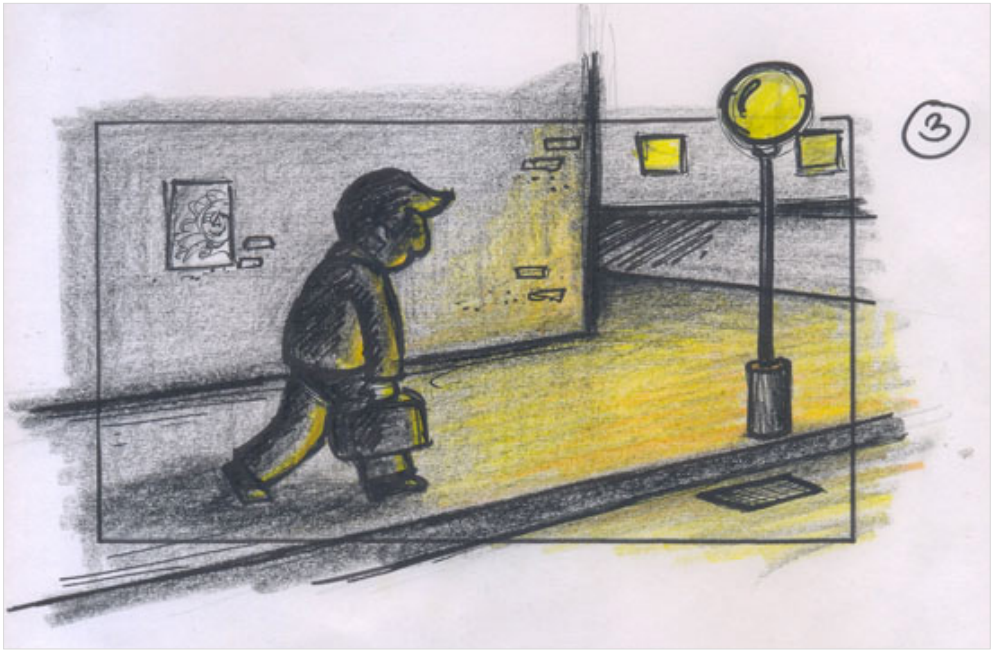
Phone Ringing:
Suddenly his phone starts ringing. He pauses while walking, and sighs. The phone stops ringing. He starts walking again and takes the next turn to his apartment.

• Sandy is tired and frustrated, so he is walking slowly, dragging his feet. Suddenly his phone starts ringing.

• He slows down and then stops. Instead of receiving the call, he just sighs and starts walking again. He then takes the next turn to his home.

• In the background, a shop that has closed for the day is suggested, as it is late in the evening.

• In the foreground, a street light flickers intermittently. Yellow light and play of shadows have been added to create the mood for the scene.



Sandy is tired and frustrated, so he is walking slowly, dragging his feet.

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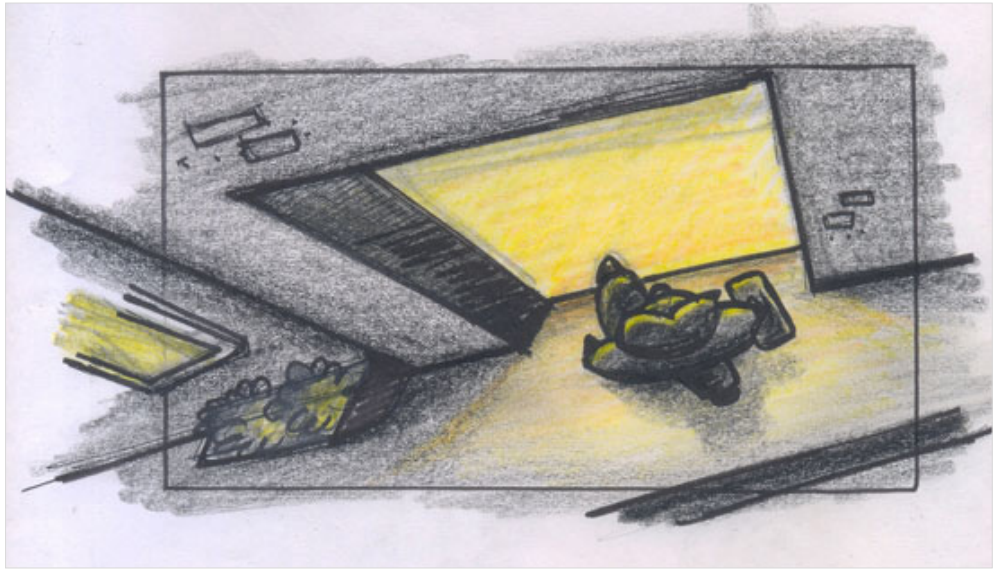
Sketch 04

Sandy (protagonist) Enters his Building:

• Sandy reaches his apartment and enters inside. To show that he lives in an apartment, a top view of the building is drawn.

• The light is shown coming from inside the building, falling on sandy's face and the shadow on his back is meant to create a more dramatic effect.



Sandy reaches his apartment and enters inside.

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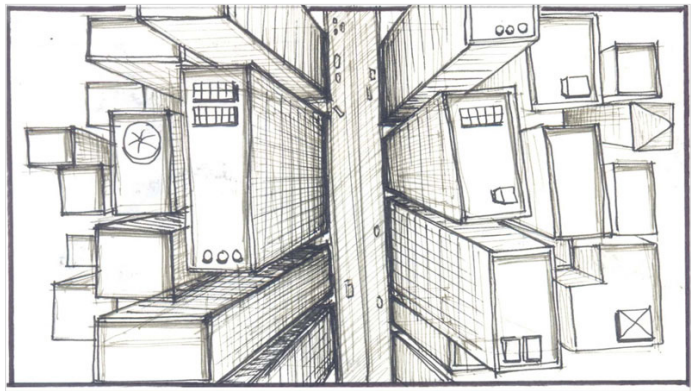

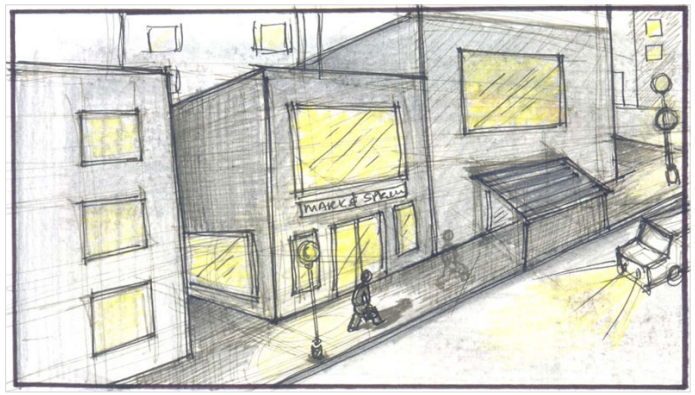

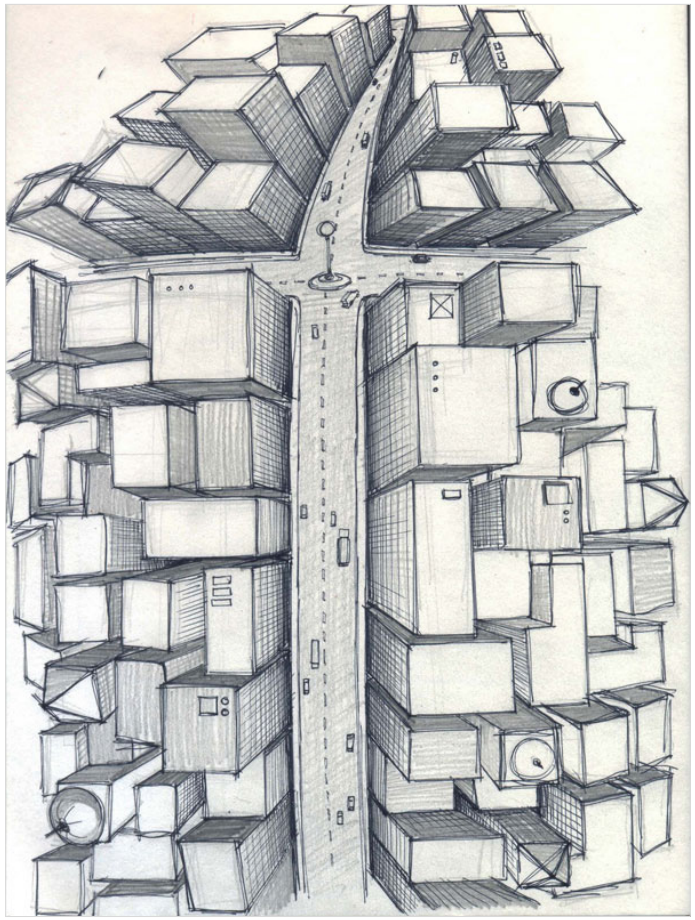

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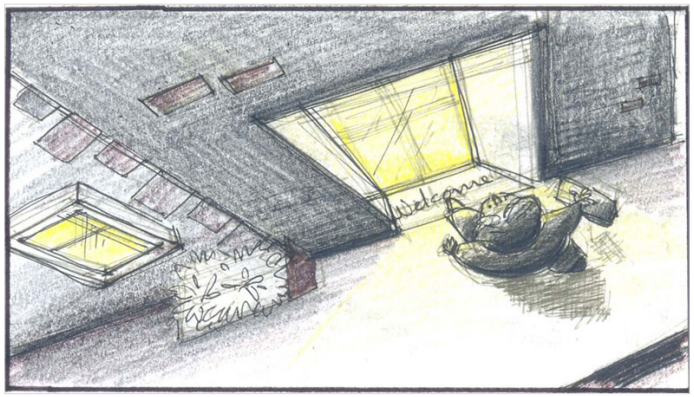

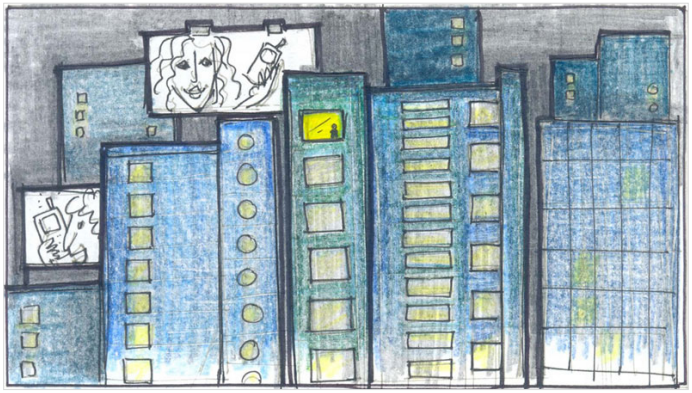
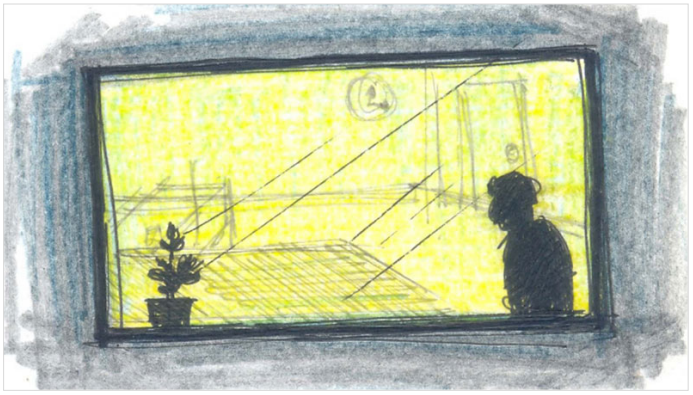
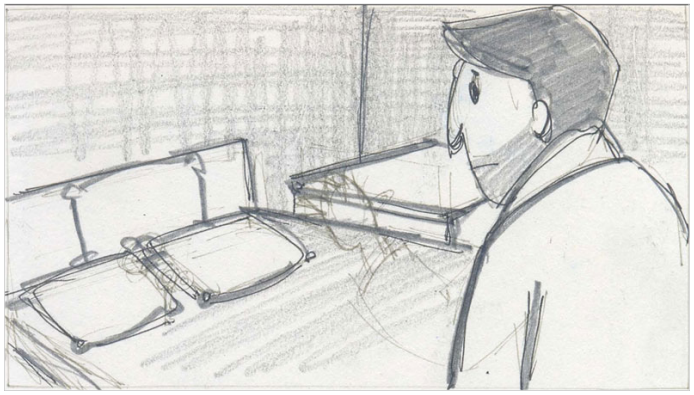

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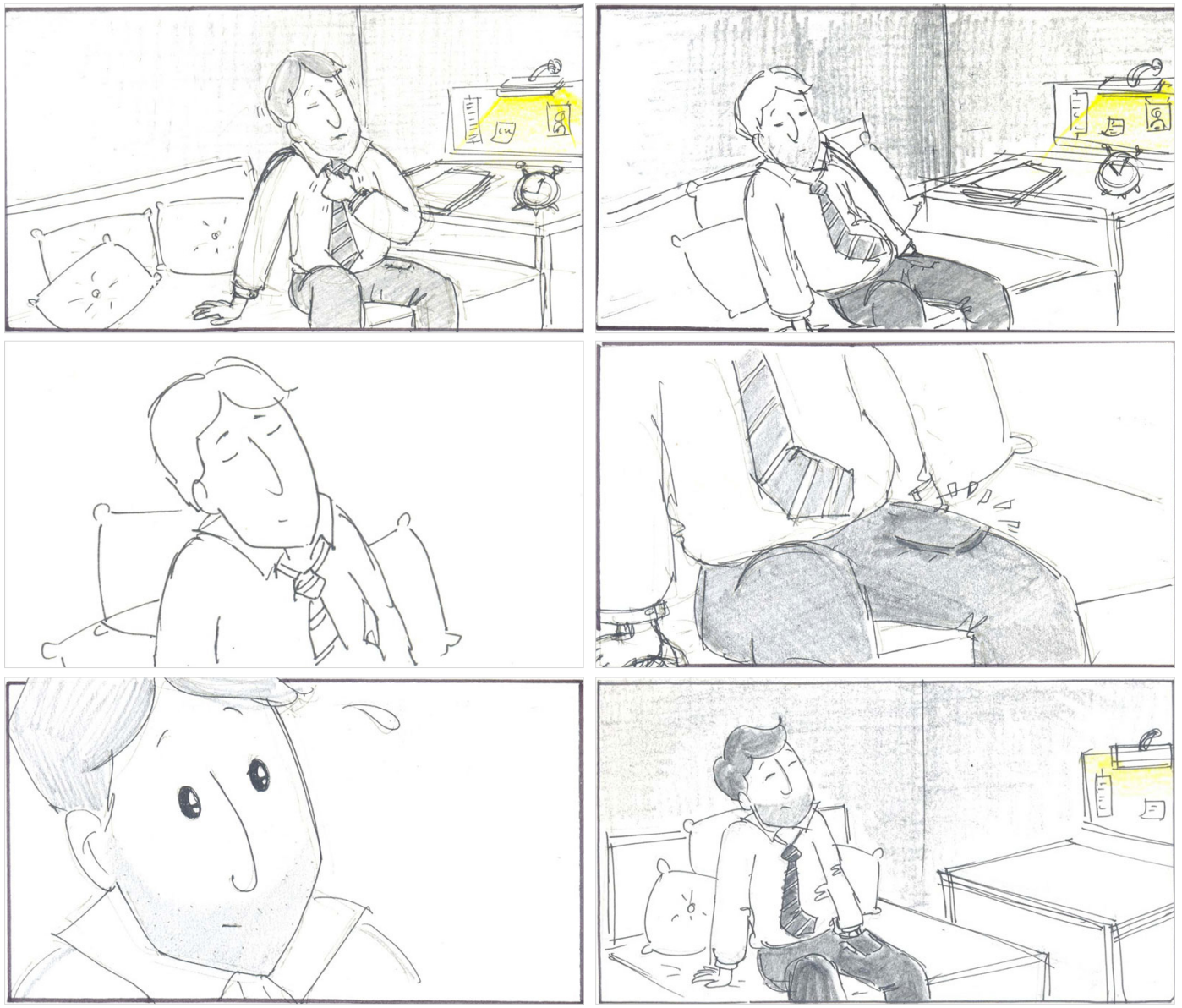

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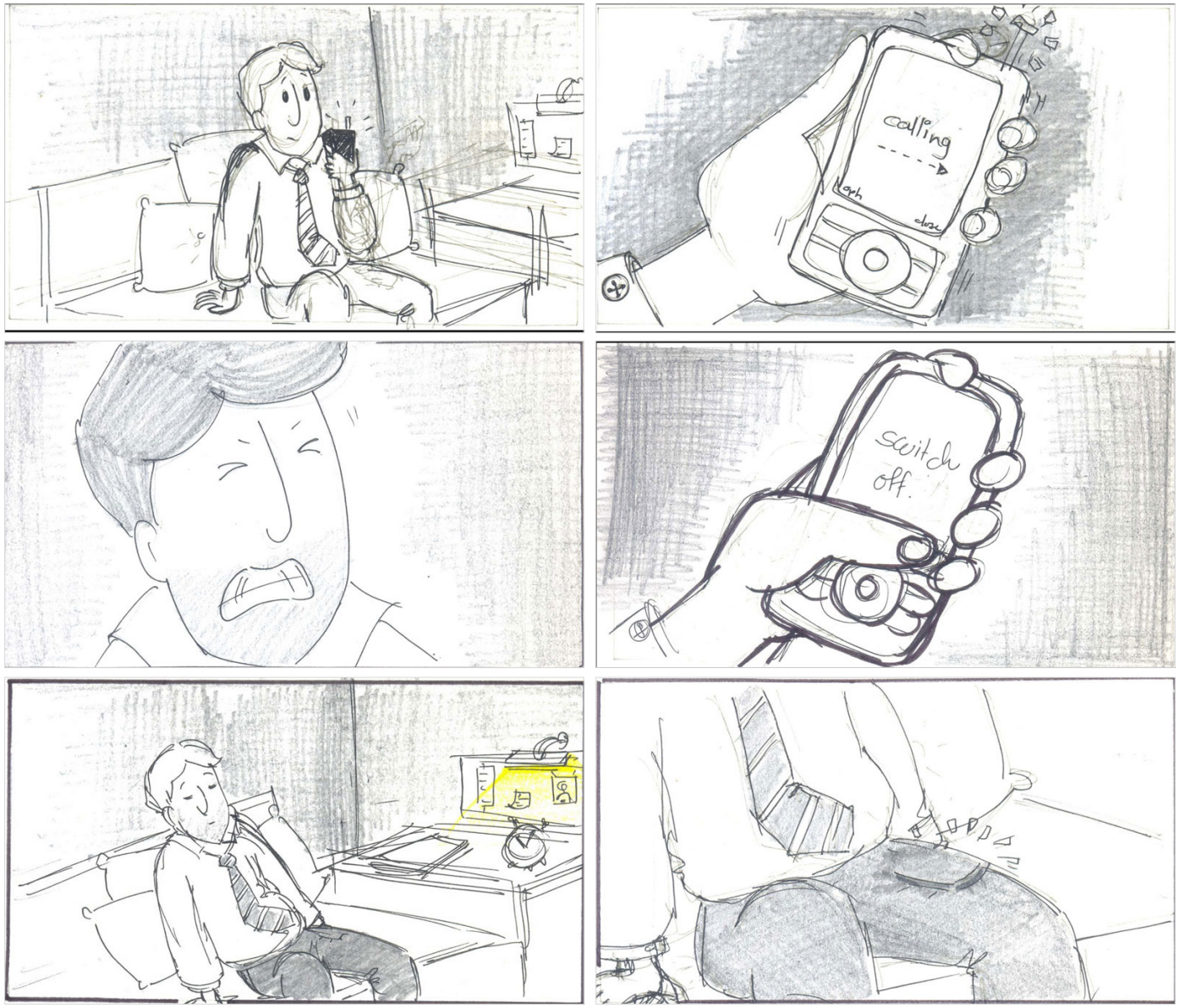

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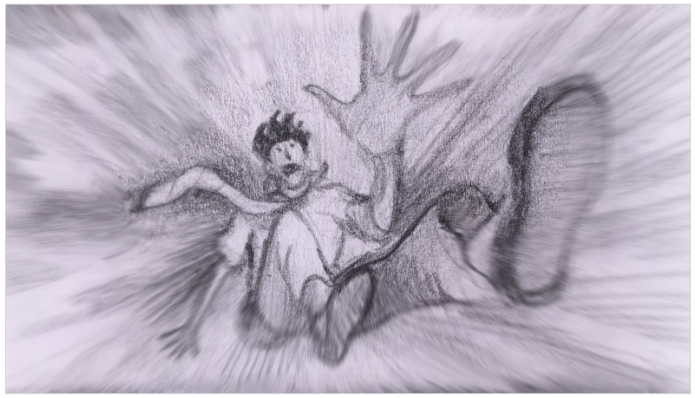

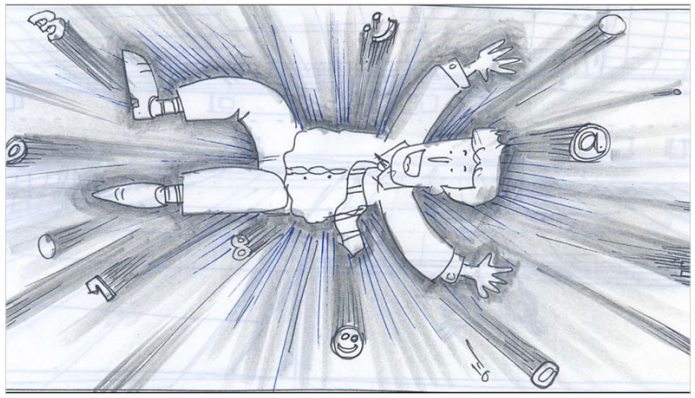

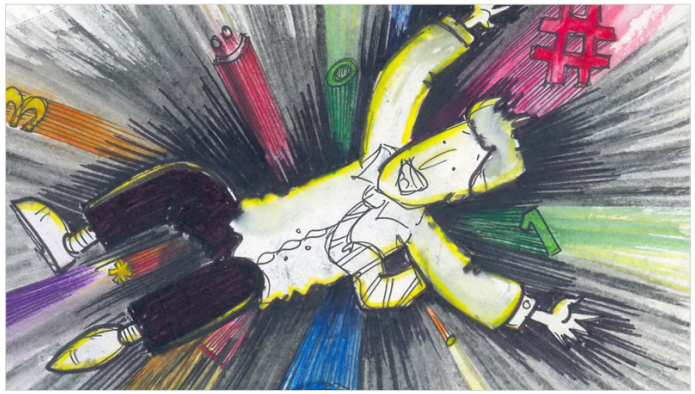

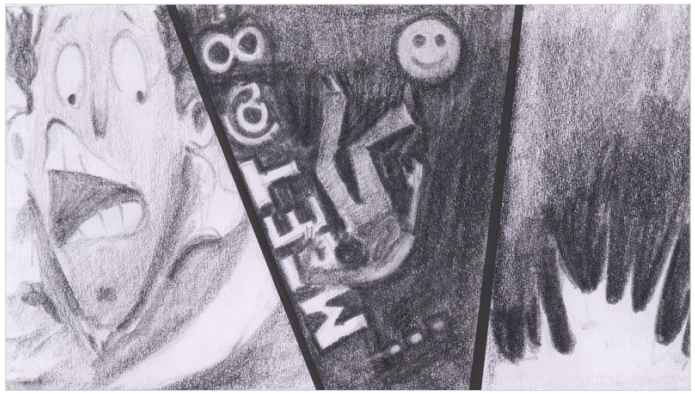

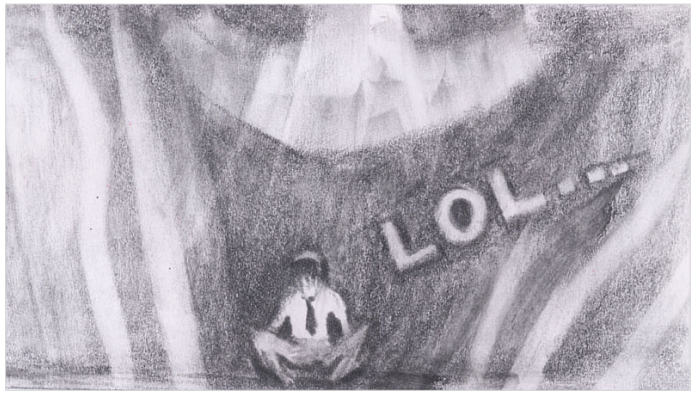

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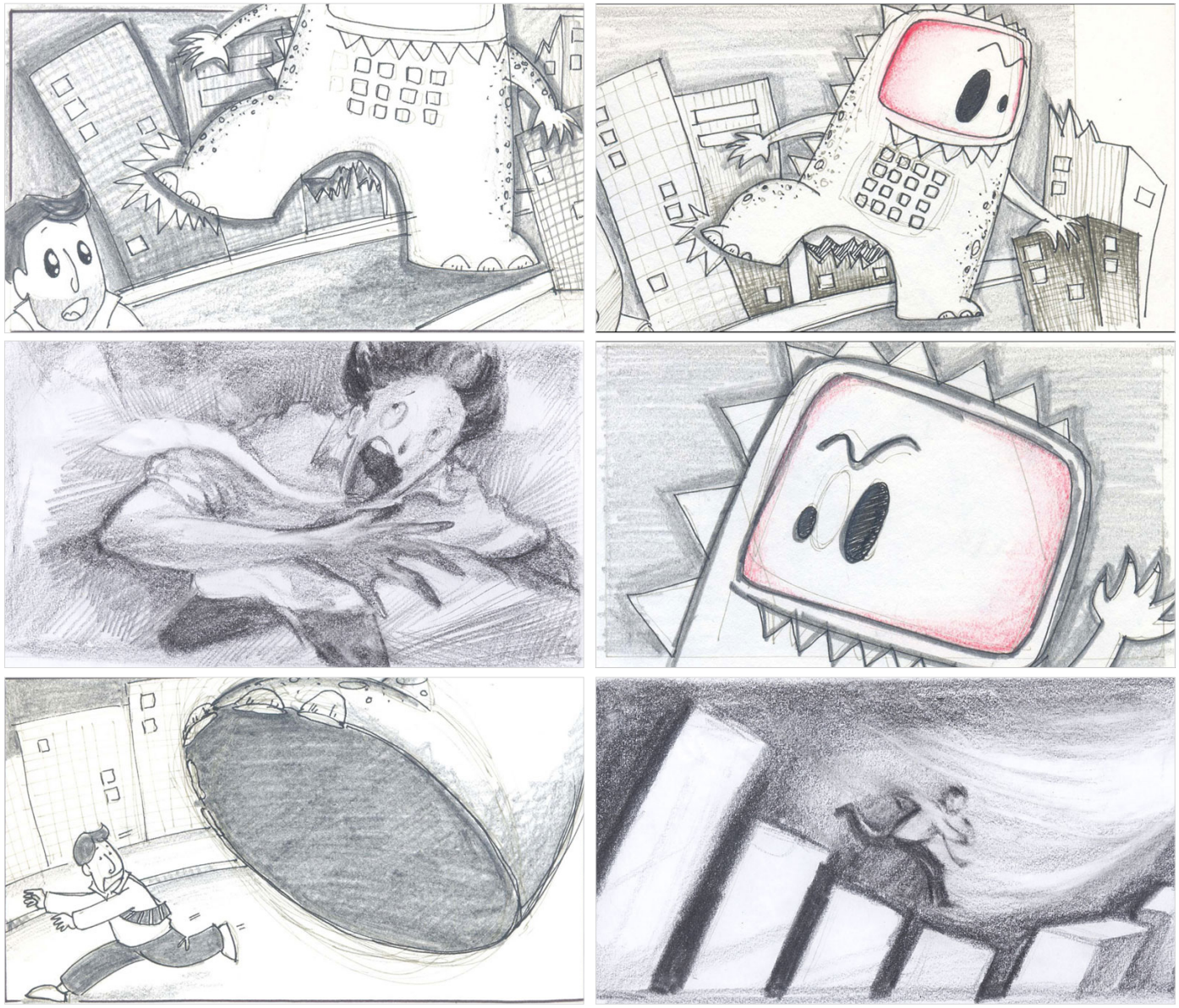

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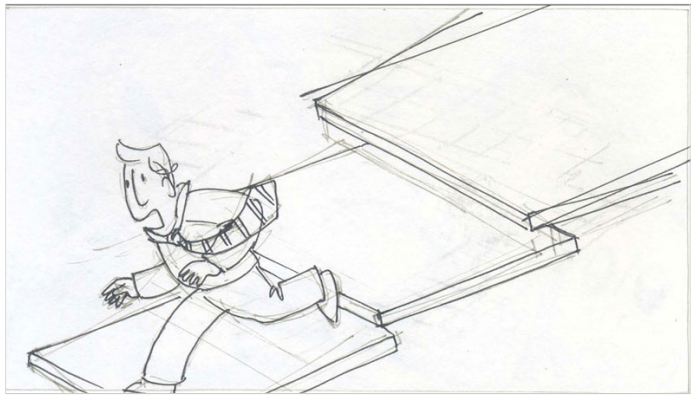
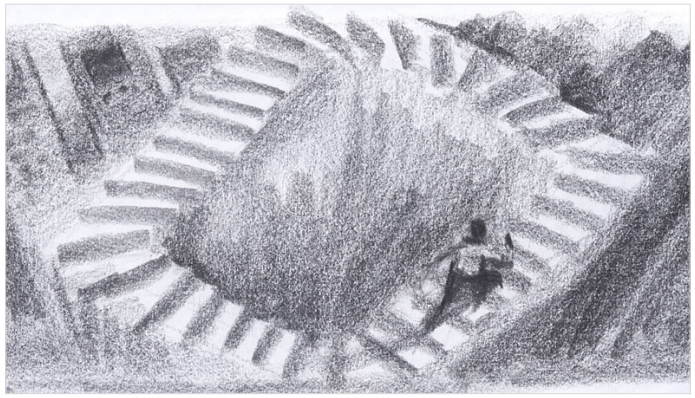
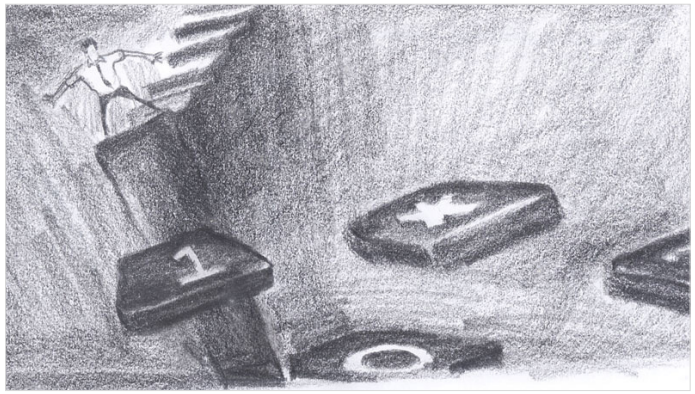

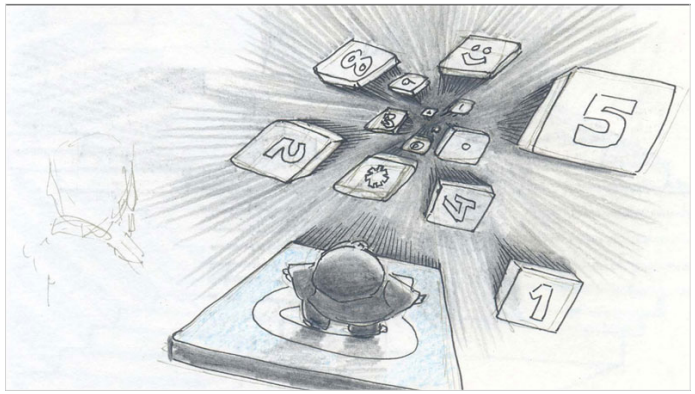
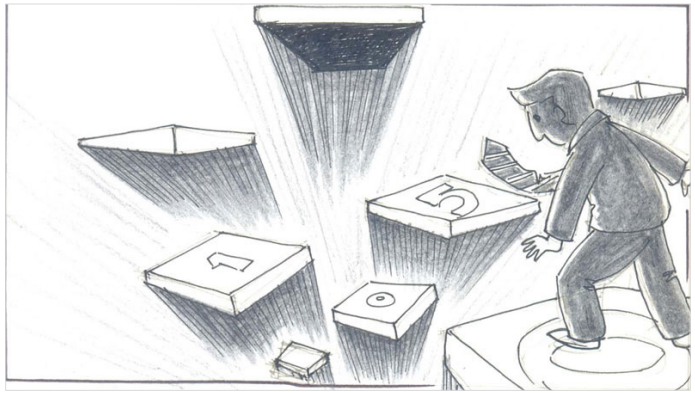

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Story Sketches for Animation

Visual Expressions of the Story

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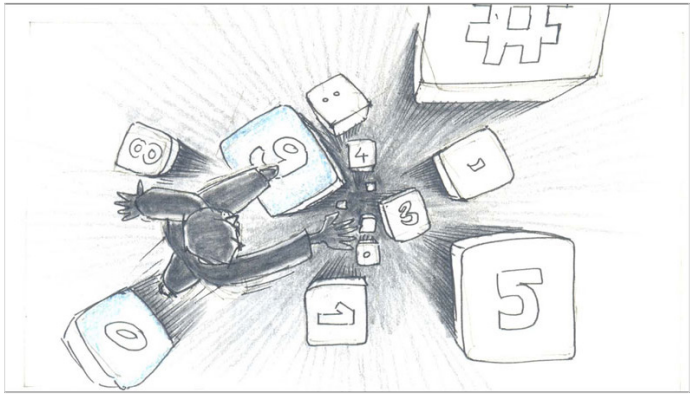

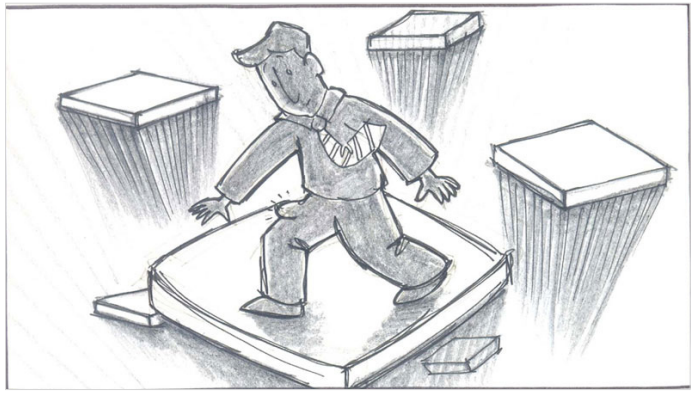

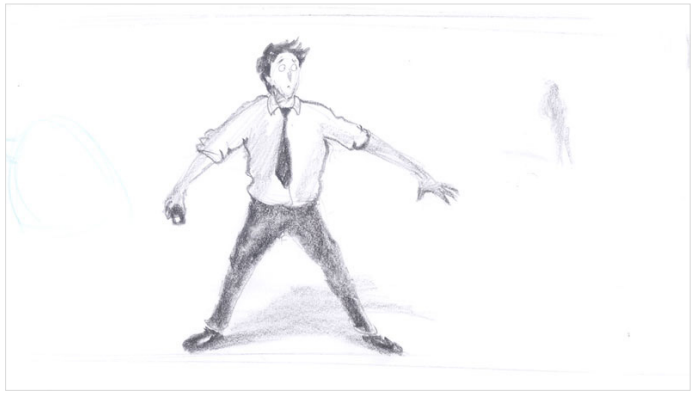

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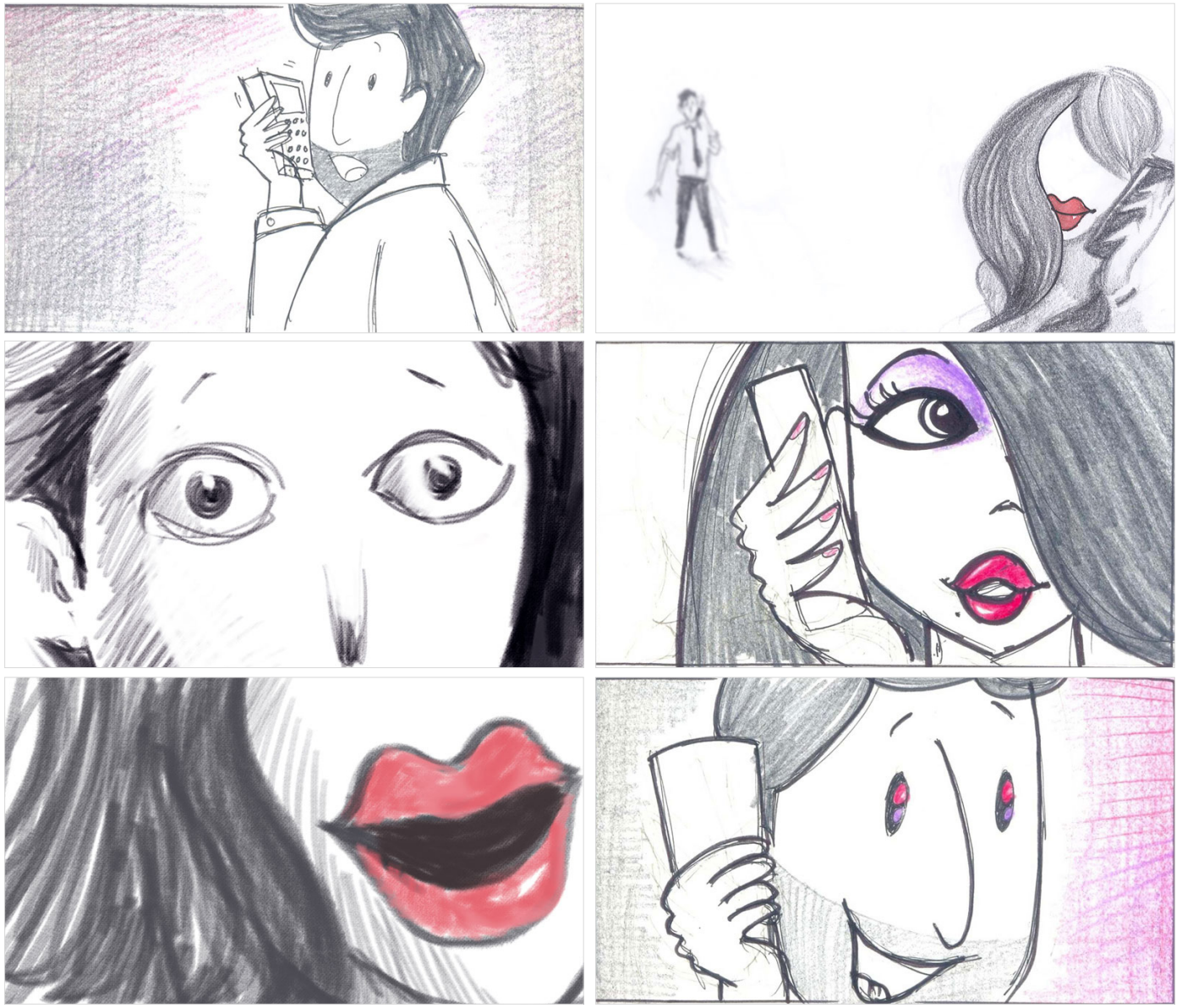

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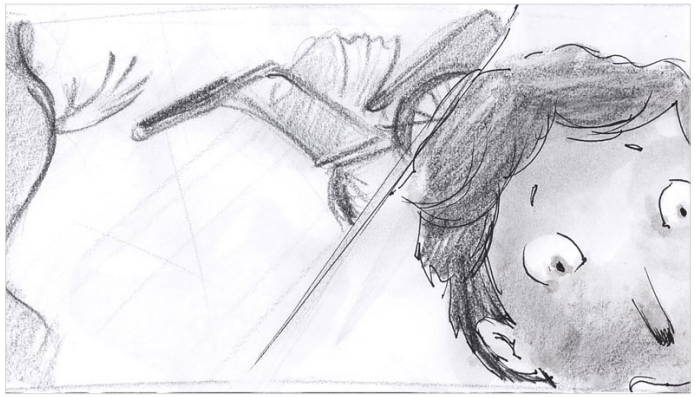

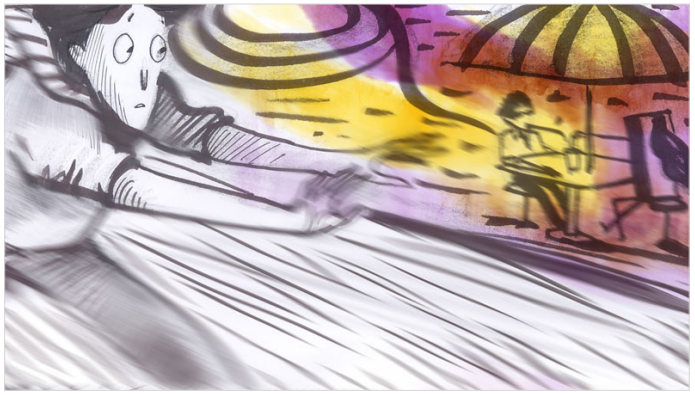

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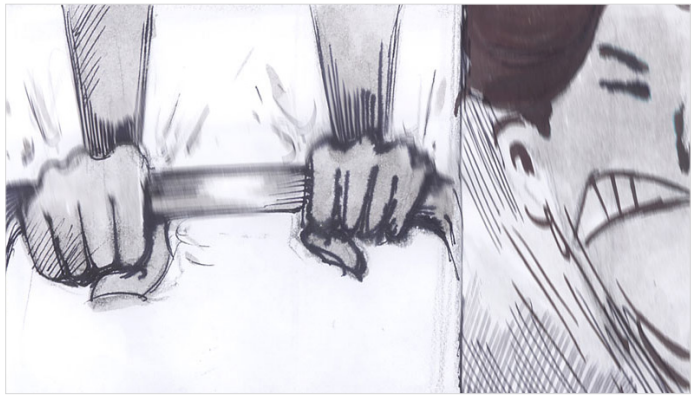

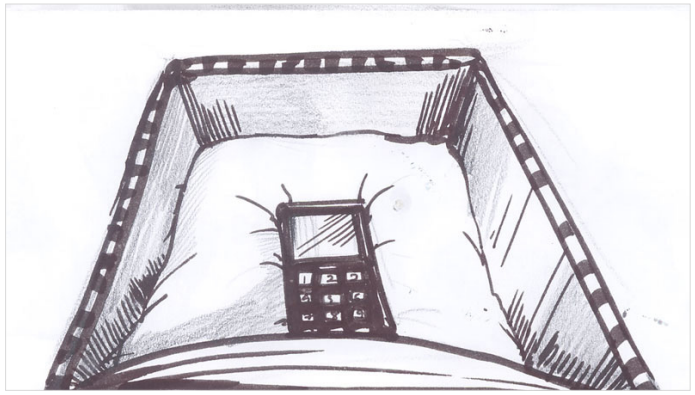
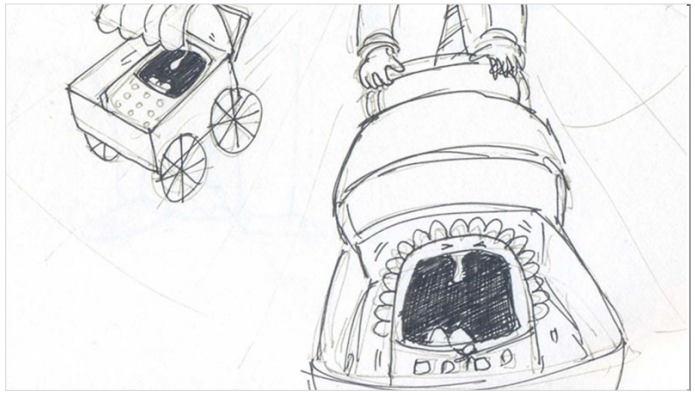

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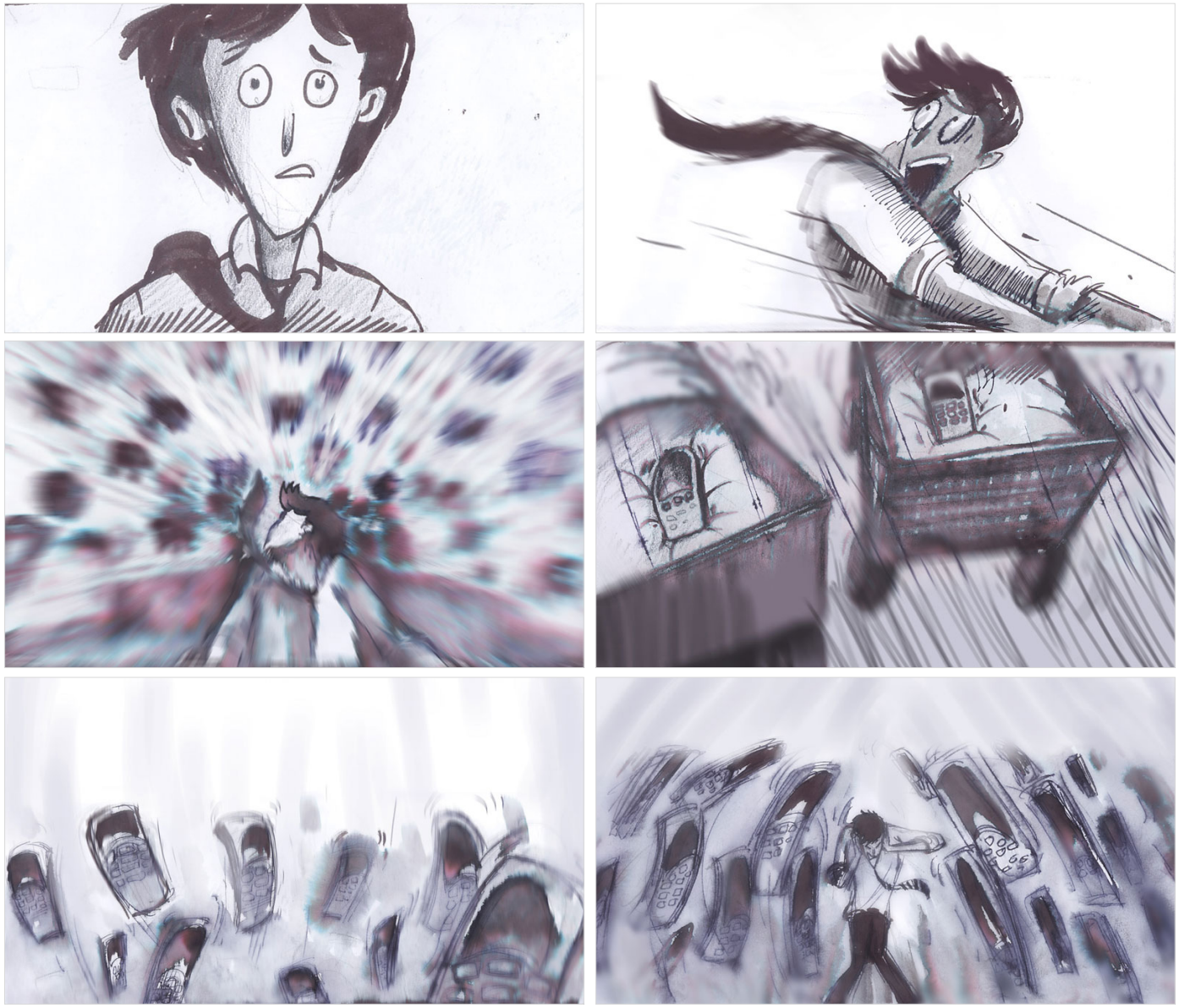

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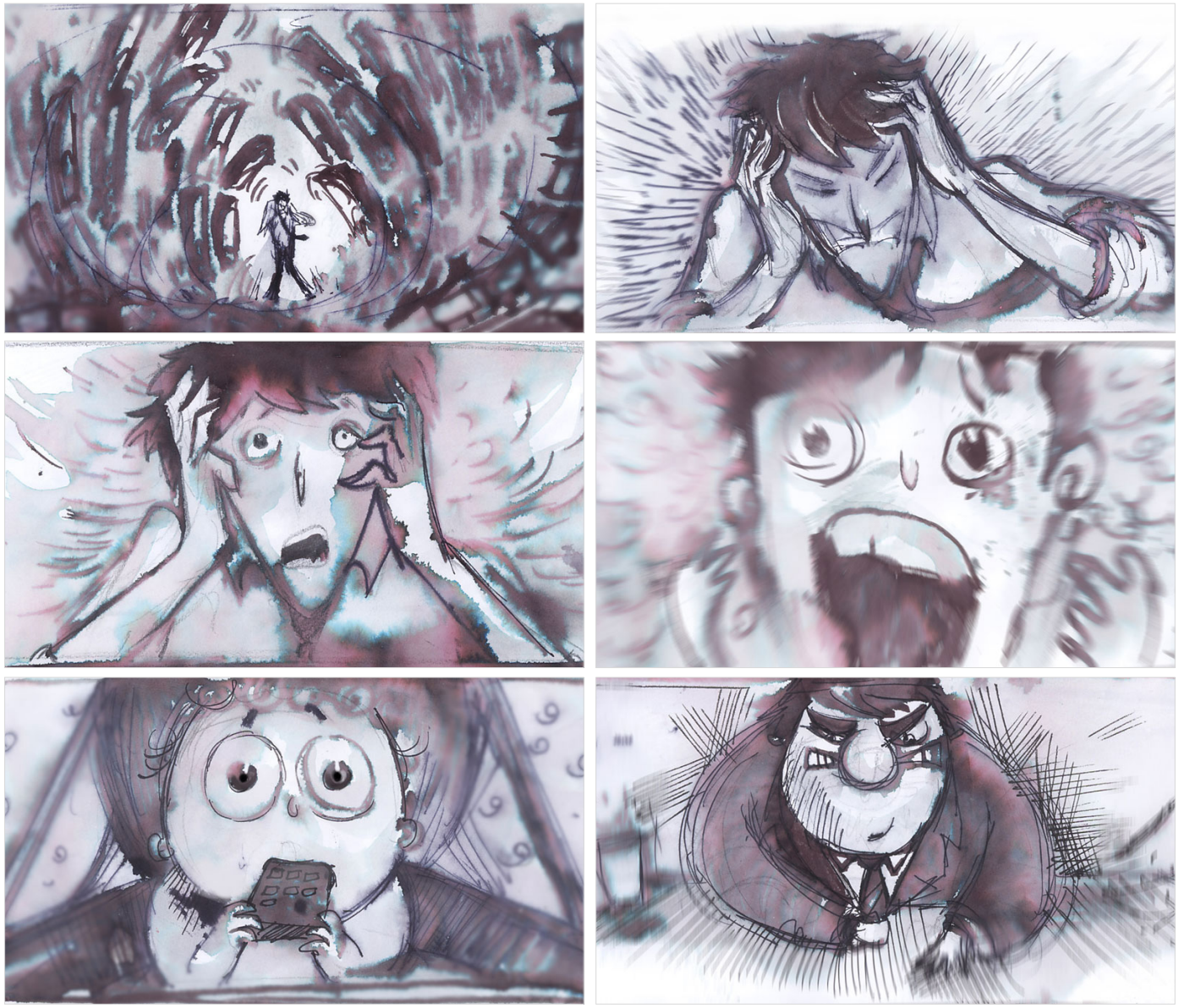

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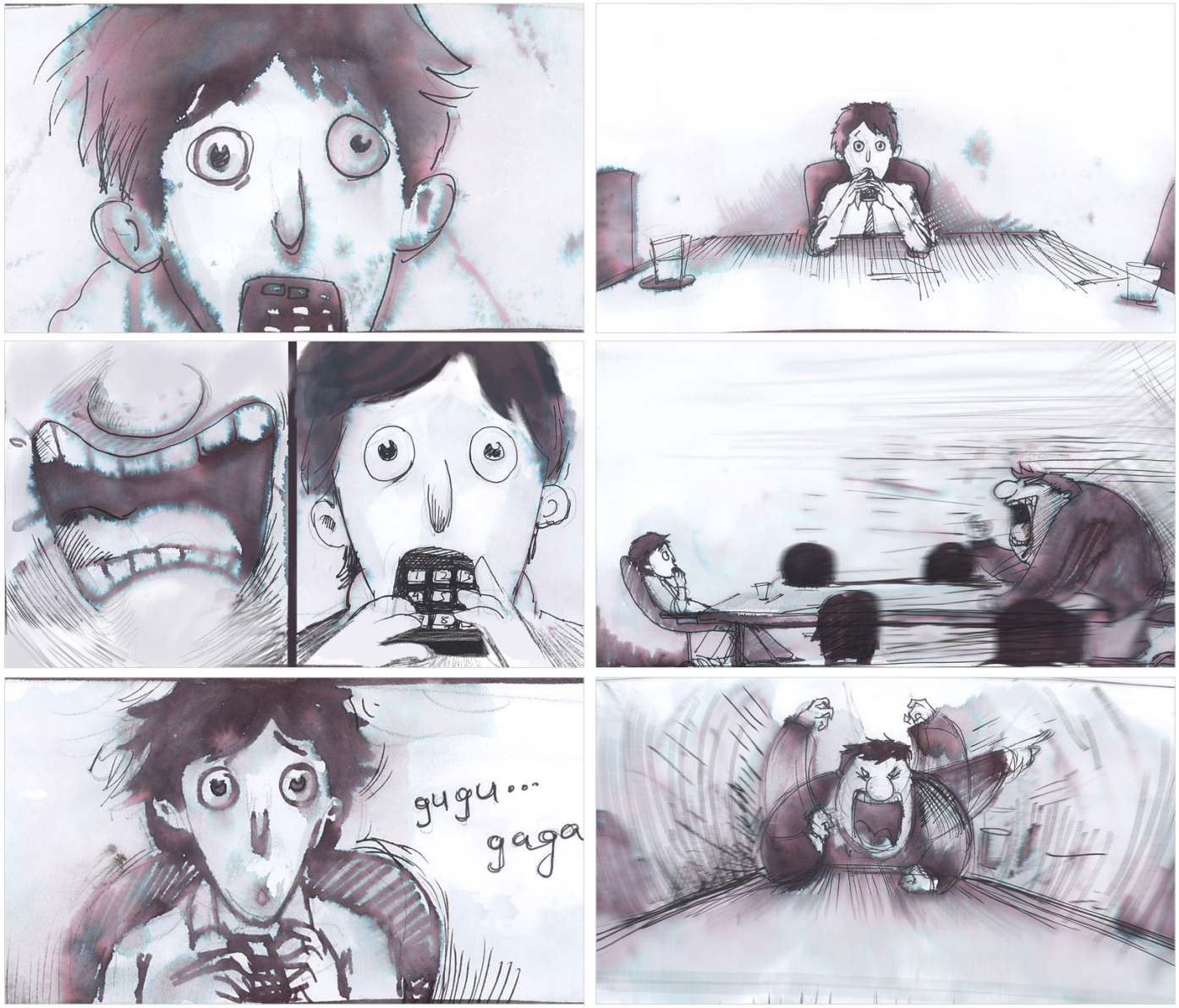

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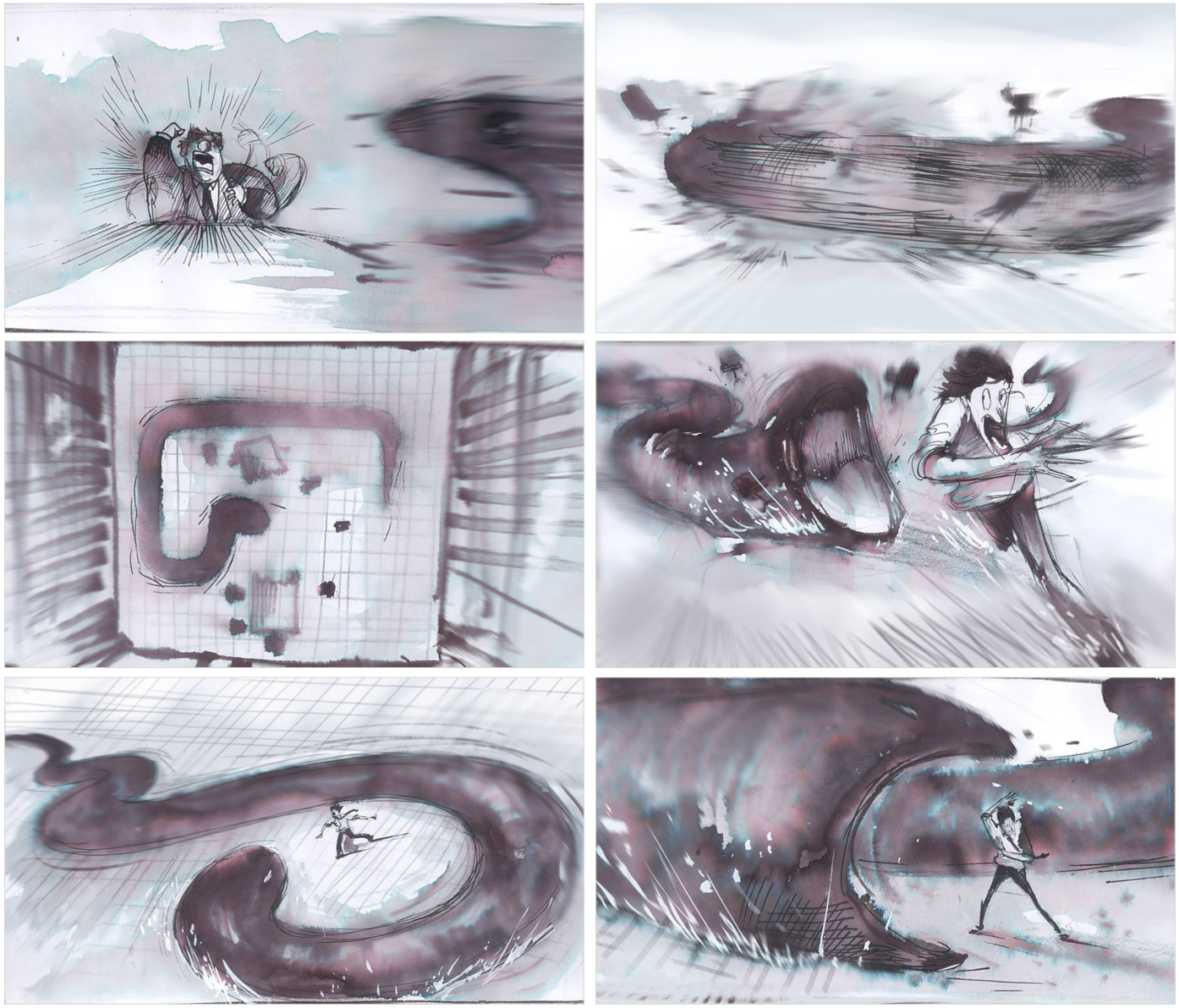

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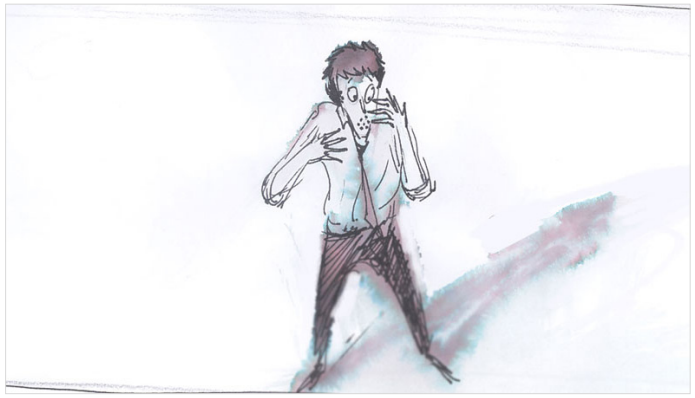

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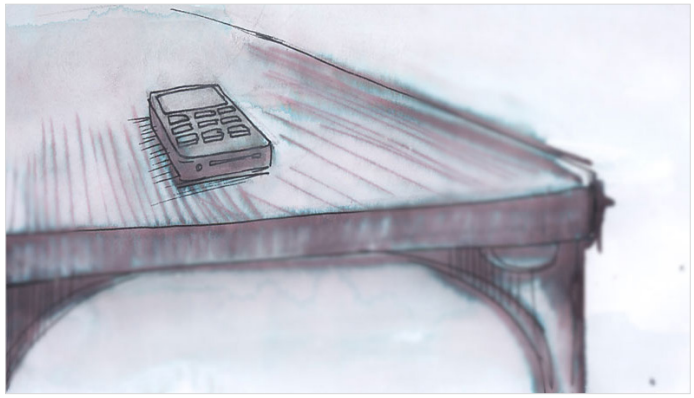

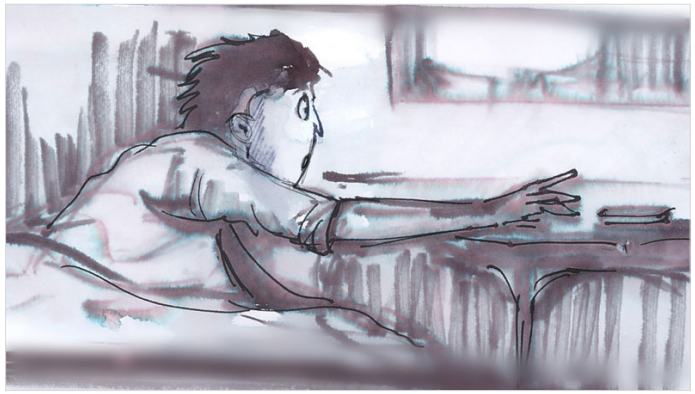

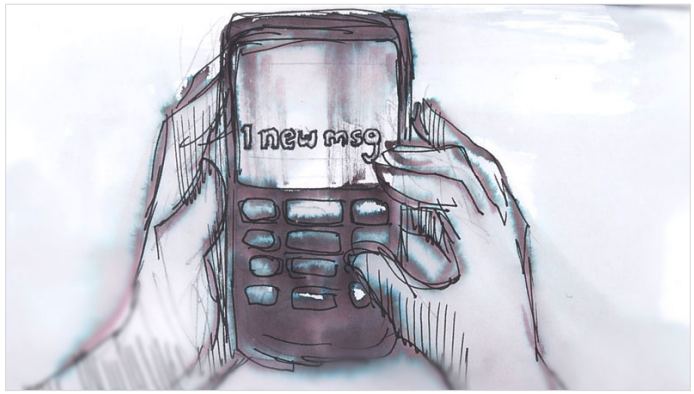

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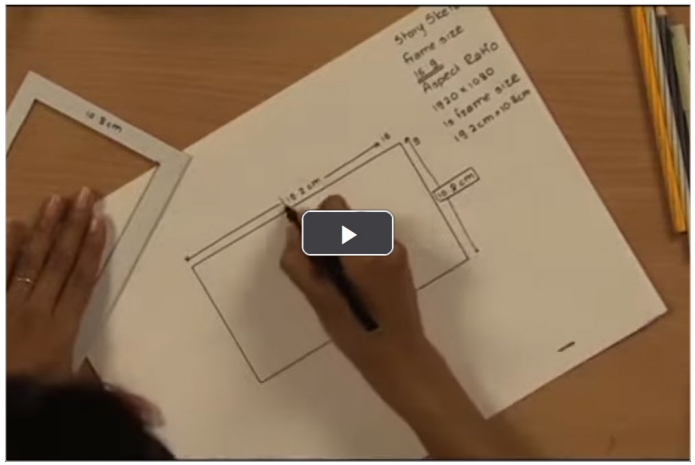
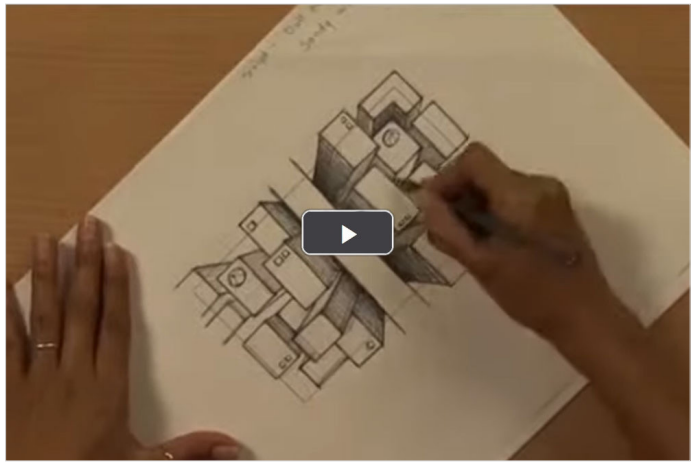
Discussion Process



Making a Template



Sketches 01

Sketches 02

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Sketches 03

Sketches 04

Animatics

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Contact Details

This documentation for the course was done by Samidha Gunjal, IDC, IIT Bombay.

You can get in touch with her at gdhamisa[at]gmail.com

You can write to the following address regarding suggestions and clarifications:

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